"The ceremonies practised on the wedding-night itself are of particular interest. Among the Canelos Indians custom forbids the bridegroom to spend the first night with his bride. That night is spent by him not only in another room but even in another house. The practice is due to fear of evil, supernatural powers. If the bridegroom spends the first night with his young wife, it is believed he will soon die, and his wife too is exposed to supernatural dangers. The Indians of Canelos know a sort [210] of jus primae noctis, but the 'right' in question is not claimed by the medicine-man or chief but by the evil demon, called supai, and the bridegroom, fearing the revenge of the demon, voluntarily cedes the right to him. However, the following night is also critical, since it is believed that the demon wants to continue having the woman and is jealous of her husband. The first nuptial embrace, which takes place in the presence of the whole assembly invited to the feast, is therefore, at any rate in some cases, arranged in the following way. The bride is placed in the bed which is made of split bamboo. On her bosom two bananas are placed in such a way that they easily fall down at her movements. These bananas represent the first children to which the woman will give birth and which, it is feared, may possibly be twins owing to the interest taken in the woman by the supai. The bananas are therefore called palánda huahua, i.e. 'the banana babes'. Under the bed a little boy is placed. When the young couple embrace each other the bananas fall to the ground, one after the other, and the boy hidden under

the bed at once catches them crying out, 'Now the babe arrived'! Then he comes forth and presents the first banana to the assembly, the other one being thrown away. A man steps forward and offers himself as comparu (god-father) of the newborn child. He receives the banana which is carefully wrapped in a cloth, and gives it a name. The 'banana babe' is afterwards placed above on the roof of the house, where it is kept until the real firstborn child arrives. Then the same Indian presents himself to be the god-father of the child, and the same name is given to it as was before given to the banana.

In order to understand this curious custom we have first of all to take into consideration that the Canelos Indians have a superstitious dread of twins, owing to reasons which will presently be explained more fully. By thus dramatically representing the very thing they fear may happen, namely, that the bride shall first bring forth twins, where the supai or demon is the father of the second child, the Indians hope to prevent that ominous eventuality. The incident has in mimicry been anticipated in the arrangement with the two bananas and will not therefore take place in reality. The fact that the first nuptial embrace is public in the way we have seen, is due to the idea that thus the evil spirit may be prevented from harming the couple.

The ceremony at the wedding-night is not always the one just described, when two bananas are used to represent twins. In some cases the Canelos Indians by the

ceremony in question only aim at neutra-[211]lizing in general, the possible harmful effects proceeding from the demon, and to secure a happy first delivery. Instead of using two bananas, they only use a manioc root which is wrapped in a piece of linen and placed on the bride's bosom, just as is in [sic] done other cases with the bananas. The rest of the ceremony is the same, a boy being hidden under the bed, who has to catch the manioc and present is [sic] as the 'first-born babe', and so forth.

It is not only the first nights that are believed to be critical for the newly-married pair. Generally the demon is supposed to continue molesting the young woman for some time, visiting her at night in dreams and trying to have intercourse with her even though she sleeps with her husband. In the morning the woman tells her husband that the supai has molested her in a dream. The husband summons a medicine-man, who first drinks the narcotic aya huasca to ascertain the true nature and origin of the importunate demon. Thereupon he prepares a medicine by crushing and boiling the stem of a vine called shigshi huasca, or the rind of a shrub called pétun cara, and gives the decoction to the woman to drink. This medicine is supposed to kill the demon and thus to rid the woman of his nightly visits.

The decoction of the vine shigshi huasca or the rind pétun cara is commonly used by the Canelos women as a means of abortion in general. But abortion most frequently seems to take place just in cases when the pregnancy of the woman is believed to have

been caused by a demon and is consequently due to superstition.

For the husband himself there is, owing to the jealousy of the demon, the constant danger that he may die on the spot on having intercourse with his wife, and this is particularly supposed to be the case if the woman is young and pretty. Sometimes the danger is not believed to be wholly over until two or three children have been born of the marriage.

As I have stated before the Canelos Indians, who are under the influence of the Catholic mission, are now essentially monogamous. Formerly, however, they practised polygyny much in the same form as the Jibaros do, and even to-day polygamous tendencies can be found among them."

1: Karsten--219 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
845, 826 (1928-29)

"The consequence of intercourse with the demon will be that the woman will either fall ill and die or give birth to a monstrous child with claws, with hair over the whole body, without ears, or deformed or defective in some other way. Such a monster is called supai huahua 'the son of a demon', and is invariably killed by the Indians who also regard the incident as particularly unlucky and ominous: they have the demon in a material shape in their midst. Among the Canelos Indians the supai huahua is buried alive in the forest. The father of the child, the supai, they say, will himself come and fetch his son; therefore it must not be directly killed but buried alive."

"It is, however, not only monstrous and defective children that are thus regarded as the direct result of demoniacal action. The same superstition is held about twins, even when there is nothing abnormal in their outward appearance. The primitive Indian is unable to grasp the idea that one man can be the father of two children born at once. Hence when twins are born in a family only the child arriving first can be the offspring of the husband of the woman; the other one must have been begotten either by another man or, more generally, by a demon, and is therefore killed. This belief is found among Indians in different parts of the South American continent and affords the true explanation of the common practice of infanticide in the case of twins. In Ecuador it seems to prevail among all tribes except among the Jibaros.(1) As to the Canelos Indians, it has among them inter alia given rise to that interesting marriage custom which has been related above. In regard to the fear of twins I may add that at Canelos the married men never eat two bananas which are grown together, believing that if they do eat them their wives will give birth to twins.

"1. The superstition in question exists for instance among the Napo Indians and the Záparos. The latter not only kill the second child, but are in the habit of chanting and beating drums every night during a whole month after the birth of twins, in order to counteract the evil consequences arising from the house having been polluted by a demon."

On the other hand, the savage JIBAROS do not seem to share this superstition. On the contrary, they say that they are pleased when twins are born, because they want to have as many children as possible. But [222] even the Jibaros are firmly convinced that children who are born deformed or defective in any way have been begotten by demoniacal operation. Such a child is called nētsi, pasúna, 'deformed', 'monstrous', or iguánchi uchi, 'the son of a demon'. Nētsi properly speaking means 'deaf and dumb', but also 'deformed' in general, and is thus particularly used in the same sense as iguánchi uchi. The Jibaros always kill a deformed 'demoniacal' child by crushing it under the feet, and bury it in the forest.

How the conception through a demon (iguánchi) takes place, the Jibaros cannot explain with the same realistic details as the Canelos Indians, but as to the fact itself they have no doubt. Most generally the birth of a nētsi, pasúna, or iguánchi uchi follows as the consequence of unlawful marriage, especially a marriage within the forbidden degrees of relationship, when brother and sister, or cousins on the male side marry, or when a man marries his niece or a woman her nephew. Such marriages are therefore looked upon with horror and strictly prohibited by Jibaro custom. The birth of a demon (a monstrous child) is regarded as a disgrace and an unfortunate incident not only for the parents but for the whole family and tribe."

1: Karsten--225 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
845 (1928-29)

"Generally the Indian woman bears children with ease, and should the birth be difficult this would be a sure sign that evil spirits or mysterious influences have been at work."

28: Tessman--363 [2] (No date) 1930 Jivaro
116, 845

Deformed babies are regarded as children by demons: they are buried alive.

Twins occur, and they are desirable since they help to increase the population more rapidly. There do not seem to be any special names for twins. Triplets are unknown.

34:Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

553 born. In some families, the father names both sons and daughters; but in others, the father may give the boys their names and the mother may bestow the names on the girls. If the father's father or the mother's mother are still alive, they may be asked to name the child of their own sex. In any [577] event, ideally the child should be named for a deceased relative of the parental or grandparental generation on either side of the family who, if male, was respected for killing and working hard and, if female, respected for working hard. [551] The names are often those of animals, especially birds, while many others have no meaning other than as names. Within a 304 few days of naming, both the male and female infants have their ears pierced.

847 Infanticide is regularly practiced only in the case of deformed children. It is accomplished by crushing the infant with a foot. Sometimes unmarried girls kill their "illegitimate" babies immediately upon birth if they have no expectation of marrying the father. Infanticide of undeformed babies [845] by married women seems to be unheard of. Birth of twins is never a reason for infanticide.

846 After the first two weeks or so, the new mother returns to the garden. The work there is arduous, involving much squatting and stooping in connection with harvesting manioc 854 and, especially, weeding. As a result, she normally leaves the infant at home in a small hammock by her bed. Since the garden work takes many hours of her day, the baby often becomes hungry and cries a great deal without getting attention. [857] If there is a daughter approximately four years of age or more in the household, the baby's mother will ask her to tend it. When the infant cries considerably, the baby-tender will pick it up and sing to it. Not surprisingly, the typical lullaby 854 among the Jivaro is not sung by the mother, but by a female 533 539